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"God loves stories," Jews love questions: I.B. Singer questions God

Judith Oster

¹ In discussing Jewish Identity and Otherness, I choose to focus on a characteristically Jewish way of reacting to the deepest philosophical questions, especially those born out of suffering or doubt. Not much given to seeking out suffering for its redemptive potential, Jews, in their literature (from the Hebrew Bible to modern times), have more often called God to account, or at least kept asking, "Why?" Job contends with God. Before him, Abraham argues with God, questions His justice in destroying Sodom if there might be righteous people there - perhaps fifty; then bargains God down from fifty to forty-five, to forty, to thirty, to twenty, to ten (*Genesis* 18: 23-33). Even humble Tevye asks why, complains to God - respectfully, even lovingly, of course: ("Then I asked God, as Job had once asked Him, 'What hast Thou seen in old Job, dear Lord, that Thou never leavest him be for a moment? Are there no other people in the world but him?'" [Aleichem 158] or: "Why do you always pick on Tevye to do Thy will? Why don't you play with someone else for a change, a Brodsky or a Rothschild?" [xiv]) The story as question, as a way of questioning, is a tradition brilliantly exploited by I. B. Singer.

² Benjamin Harshav (in "The Semiotics of Yiddish Communication") tells us that in popular form, Yiddish internalized some essential characteristics of "Talmudic" dialectical argument (145), and that much Yiddish conversation was derived from religious and moral discourse, which advances not in a straight line, but through indirect "translogical" language, for example, asking a question - or better yet, answering a question with a question;¹ looking for a counter-argument or alternative possibility; answering with an example, simile, or analogical situation; quoting a holy text or proverb; posing a riddle or telling a joke; and illustrating a point or answering a question indirectly with an anecdote, a parable, or a story. In much Jewish literature, to question is the point; to answer is to question - or to present stories that raise questions and require interpretations - conflicting, of course. Even modern Jewish writers, not necessarily schooled in Talmud, show the influence of its questioning and its dialectic.

3 Writers like Weisel, Singer, and Sholom Aleichem, far though they may have strayed from their fathers' and teachers' rabbinic courts, were steeped in Talmudic study, and in Midrash - that genre of Rabbinic literature, spanning more than a thousand years, consisting of exegesis, sermons, laws, and narratives known as Aggadah (literally: that which is told). While Aggadot did not pretend to systematic philosophies, they did attempt to answer questions concerning God, the purposes of human existence, the relation of God and man, and of both with the world, the problems of good and evil, the position of the Jews among the gentile nations, and their mission; the eventual triumph of the Jewish people over their sufferings. Many did so in narratives and parables clearly intended for those who could interpret, see their play and their metaphors, "read" their lessons. It is especially pertinent that the noun "Midrash" has at its root the verb "Drash," which means to search, seek, examine, investigate, but also to learn and teach (Herr 1507-8).

4 For even the most fanciful narratives were at bottom didactic in that interpreting them was not seen simply as an amusing intellectual game; neither were even the most poetic tales seen as art for art's sake, but rather a way, through metaphor and narrative, to convey moral and ethical teachings, to use narrative style designed to touch the human heart "so that one should recognize Him who created the world, and so cling to His ways", "To bring down Heaven to earth and to elevate man to Heaven." One studied Aggadah in order to get to know God ("Aggadah"355-356). In a tradition where literary representation for its own sake partook of transgression unless it was canonical (Bloom, *Kabbalah* 82), one might suspect that while the "tellings" served the didactic purpose which was their justification, at the same time they allowed their authors a more artistic creative outlet, for they created tales of beauty, metaphorical richness, and imaginative play. In one rabbinic reference to Aggadah, the Biblical description of manna (*Exod.* 16:31) is invoked as a comparison: "Some sages say that, like manna [which drew the heart of a hungry man], Aggadah draws a man's heart [to Torah], even as water [draws the heart of a thirsty man]. (Stern xviii). The secular Hebrew poet Bialik called Aggadah "the principal literary form" of the Jewish people, the "classic expression of their spirit," the product of the creative powers of generations of rabbis that he likened to "a beautiful palace" in which "the spirit and soul of the Jews permanently dwelled" (qtd. in Stern xvii), "the key to Jewish uniqueness" (xix). In the 12th century Abraham, the son of Moses Maimonides, wrote an introduction to Aggadah² in which he elevated Aggadah as a serious medium by calling on its readers to be interpreters of its "real meaning"; in so doing he was elevating as well his ideal listeners and readers, expecting them to be capable of finding meanings hidden from those who could understand only those more obvious meanings open to any interpreter. As David Stern writes: "the lyrical quality of Aggadah with its frequently associative, rather than logical, structures of thought could pose a formidable obstacle to its comprehension" (xviii) (a description applicable to much twentieth century literature)³. Thus Aggadah clearly called on the interpretive skills of readers, but such a task presumed great poetic and narrative skills on the part of the creators of the narratives, especially the ability to invest legend, parable, tale, poetic metaphor with such weighty questions, and with attempts at answers. As a reflection and repository of the deepest and widest concerns of a people during a period of more than a thousand years, these stories became a treasury for later generations, expressing their own deepest feelings ("Aggadah" 363)⁴.

⁵ But we cannot lose sight of the fact that many of these interpretable and interpreted texts were themselves interpretations of Biblical texts. Here is the intertextuality, the text-centeredness of text upon text, story upon story, parables about parables, that, according to Norman Finkelstein, a critic like Harold Bloom will find most "Jewish" (Bloom, *Agon* 320), and that best distinguishes the modern Jewish sensibility. Finkelstein also quotes Gershom Scholem on the development of Rabbinic Judaism: "Not system but commentary is the legitimate form through which truth is approached" (1) (a judgment, incidentally, that can be squared with the religious tradition that the oral Torah, the Talmud, was also given at Mt. Sinai), and goes on to say: "For Scholem, and certainly for Bloom, to be Jewish in a modern sense is to problematize Judaism - to wander, to question, to agonize, and to appropriate, like a Kafka, a Benjamin, a Freud" (42). To do so in narrative, as Kafka and Singer do, is to be the heirs, albeit secular heirs, of the ancestral rabbis who handed down Aggadah. We remember Kafka's story of failure to interrogate: The "man from the country" (literally translated into Hebrew, so similar to *Am Haaretz*, a people from/of the land, which idiomatically means an ignoramus, an unlearned one) sits "Before the Law" and is never admitted within because of his failure to ask. And we notice that this injunction to interrogate is given to us in a story - one within a larger story, *The Trial*. We may take from this that one way not to fail before the law is to question,⁵ one mode of which is by means of story-telling - in Singer's hands, an irreverent, problematizing Aggadah, whose end is to subvert or to question rather than to establish authority. Bloom would in all likelihood see Singer's new creations as "misreadings" or "mis-prisions" - modes of reading and interpreting the strong texts that precede a writer or critic, reading further back to that strong original text of texts (*Kabbalah* 52). But, as Cynthia Ozick reminds us, the term "misprision" also means felony, wrongdoing, violation ("Literature as Idol" 194);⁶ and we may ask whether "strong readings" such as Singer's stories violate only to transgress, or do so, as did his rabbinic precursors, to teach. "A strong reading is one that produces other readings," writes Bloom (*Kabbalah* 97). Thus Ozick's "Usurpation" acknowledges her precursors as strong writer/readers; thus, this discussion and all other discussions of Singer acknowledge his strength as reader/writer, especially where his stories seem to transgress in order to disturb, to rouse us to question.

- ⁶ Singer's "A Crown of Feathers" and "The Slaughterer" raise the most profound questions of truth, of justice, of good and evil in their telling. Torn between the conflicting exhortations of her dead grandmother and her dead grandfather, between the claims of Judaism and Christianity, Akhsa (in "A Crown of Feathers"), and the reader as well, find it impossible to decide whose voice represents the Divine, and whose, the Devil. Akhsa's grandfather, a community leader, left with no heirs save his beautiful, intelligent granddaughter, has provided her with the finest tutors in Bible, French, even piano and dancing, educated her beyond what any girl in their world could have imagined. Consequently she had nothing in common with the other young girls, nor could she go to Yeshiva to discuss her learning with young men. With her beauty, wealth and accomplishments, she was much sought after as a match, but her grandmother found none of the candidates suitable for her. Once her grandmother died, her grandfather became the only one whose company she enjoyed, but of course, he kept bringing suitors to meet her (allowing her to meet the young men was his concession to her), only to have her reject them all. Finally her grandfather lost patience, and insisted on her marrying a man he had chosen, Zemach, a pious orphan

who studied day and night, and who repelled her. At the engagement party, as Akhsa was about to sign the agreement, her dead grandmother grabbed her elbow and prevented her from signing. The groom, shamed, cried out that neither he nor God would forgive such humiliation; the grandfather died soon afterwards, and Akhsa fell into melancholy.

- 7 To her surprise she found a New Testament in her grandfather's library and read it. Then began her conflicting dreams: Grandfather exhorted her to go to Zemach and apologize, become his wife even though she hated him. Later, she heard her grandmother advising her to go to the priest and follow his advice, and the two "voices" quarreled furiously in her hearing. Grandmother won out by means of a sign: she directed Akhsa to look inside her pillow for a crown of feathers no human hand could have made. Indeed, there it was: "Down and feathers entwined into a crown... On top of the crown was a tiny cross... Whoever had made this crown - angel or demon - had done his work in darkness, in the inside of a pillow. She was beholding a miracle" (357)⁷.
- 8 She went to the priest, became an apostate, and married an old squire, who died soon afterwards and left his estate to a dissolute nephew, who married Akhsa and mistreated her in every way. Becoming convinced that the crown of feathers had been the work of the devil, and convinced that it was he who ruled the universe, she began to dabble in witchcraft, and summoned up the devil, who confessed to having made the crown. "I am a deceiver," the devil laughed. And when Akhsa asked him where truth is, replied "The truth is that there is no truth" (360). She began to pray - to the God she had forsaken - which brought her grandfather back to her, advising her to repent, to find the man she had shamed, and become, again, a Jewish daughter. For months she searched yeshivas until she found Zemach - a wild and contrary man. Once she found him, her grandmother again appeared, advising her to run to the Christians, followed by her grandfather, who told her Zemach would save her from the abyss. Akhsa did penance, married Zemach, and, together with him, lived a life of the most severe asceticism, enduring his constant accusations, enduring hunger and cold, submitting to a punishing life that none of the rabbis thought necessary. Because he felt guilty about lusting for her, he refused to approach her bed. Her grandparents alternated in visiting her dreams. As she approached death "Zemach's wrath vanished... A mournful wail broke from him, 'Sacred soul, where will I be without you? You are a saint. Forgive me my harshness. It was because of my love. I wanted to cleanse you so that you could sit in paradise with the Holy Mothers'" (369). From then on Zemach cared for her devotedly, but her mind was still in torment: her grandfather told her one thing, her grandmother, another. The women brought her a pillow, and, with her last strength, she ripped open the seams and pulled out a crown of feathers; this time the four letters standing for the name of God were braided into the top. "But, she wondered, in what way was this crown more a revelation of truth than the other? Was it possible that there were different faiths in Heaven? Akhsa began to pray for a new miracle. In her dismay she remembered the Devil's words: 'The truth is that there is no truth'" (370-71). Akhsa died while Zemach was away, and he was never heard from again. Some surmised that he was a demon. The women who came to prepare Akhsa for burial could not explain a curious riddle. Her pillow case had been torn, and between her fingers were bits of down. "What had she been searching for? No matter how much the townspeople pondered and how many explanations they tried to find, they never

discovered the truth. Because if there is such a thing as truth it is as intricate and hidden as a crown of feathers."

- 9 Obviously, the elusive "truth" goes far beyond the question of which religion to choose. This story is not simply like Donne's plea to Christ to "show me your spouse so bright and clear." More fundamental, more frightening to Akhsa - and to us - is the question of whom to trust, and the question of how to choose our "truths," how to be certain we are following the right moral guides. By what signs shall we know them? And who will tell us if we are reading the signs correctly? Is there such a thing as a miracle, or even if there is, one person's miracle may be another's destruction, and how are we to know which one is on the side of the angels? There needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us of executions, burnings at the stake, and slaughter perpetrated "righteously" in the name of God and Truth. We know from our reading of *Genesis*, or *Hamlet*, *Paradise Lost* or "Young Goodman Brown" that the devil is seductive, speaks logically, and may assume a pleasing shape to tempt us toward the abyss, may appear as the ghost of one's father, or one's grandmother. And we know the trauma that many German young people experienced when they found out or suspected the evil wrought by parents, grandparents, and moral guides. Where then could "truth" or "trust" be found?
- 10 But to put Akhsa's apostasy into its social and historical context, voluntarily going over to the priest was not only a change of philosophical outlooks or of religions: in that time and place, to join the Polish church would have been seen as more than just theological betrayal, but going over to the side of those who killed one's relatives in pogroms; sharing the beliefs of the Polish peasants who assumed Christian blood to be an ingredient in Matzos, and that killing Jews at Easter was a virtuous thing to do. In addition, the suggestion that Zemach might be a demon suggests that the scourge might be more diabolical than the sin, that Zemach was not a misguided, pathological zealot whose purpose at least was for good, but an agent of the devil. Where to locate good in order to follow it, or evil in order to avoid it? Obviously, the story raises questions such as: How do we know when we are being led by the Devil and when by God? And what does God want from us? Where and how is Truth to be found? The only answer given to Akhsa, "The truth is that there is no truth," is given by the Devil. Its only evidence - the crown of feathers - ends up as merely a bunch of feathers in a ball, perhaps once a crown, perhaps only dreamt of as such. Whatever, wherever the truth may be, we, the readers, are left to wonder, to keep asking questions that yield only more questions.
- 11 "The Slaughterer" contains no devils and no Christians. It is about slaughter, and destiny, and interpretations of God's infinite wisdom. When a *schochet*, a ritual slaughterer, is needed in the village, Yoineh Meir is appointed - against his will, but who was he to differ with the Rabbi's judgment, even though he could not bear killing. Initially, he had protested against his role as slaughterer, but was told that since man's eating meat was part of the natural order, and since death was part of life and part of the Divine order, to be too compassionate toward the animals was to consider himself more compassionate than God, and
man may not be more compassionate than the Almighty, the Source of all compassion. When you slaughter an animal with a pure knife and with piety, you liberate the soul that resides in it. (207)

- 12 Still Yoineh Meir's mind "raged with questions" until he felt he was losing his mind, clearly from excess questioning:

Verily, in order to create the world, the Infinite One had had to shrink His light; there could be no free choice without pain. But since the beasts were not endowed with free choice, why should they suffer? (209)

Where did flies come from? Were they born of their mother's womb, or did they hatch from eggs? If all the flies died out in winter, where did the new ones come from in summer?... And how could anything live in the burning frost, when it was scarcely possible to keep warm under the quilt?... the mice - was it their fault that they were mice?... Then why is the cat such an enemy to it? (213)
- 13 Though it was assumed that the ritual slaughterer must be pious, and study deeply all the laws pertaining to slaughter, insuring that it be as quick and humane as possible, Yonah Meir became more and more scrupulous in his observance. He began to want to escape from the material world, but the material world pursued him. The smell of the slaughterhouse would not leave his nostrils. He tried to forget himself in the Torah, but he found that the Torah itself was full of earthly matters... Yoineh Meir knew that a man may not ask for death, but deep within him he longed for the end. He had developed a repugnance for everything that had to do with the body... [He] understood now why the sages of old had likened the body to a cage - a prison where the soul sits captive, longing for the day of its release.
- 14 His wife, his daughters, even became repugnant to him. "Why did they need so many things? Why was it necessary to clothe and adorn the body so much [?]" The air in the house stifled him; it smelled of sweat and fat, dirty underwear and urine.
- 15 As the New Year approached, the time of repentance, when trees turned saffron and days cooled, a season in which Yoineh Meir once used to feel an "exalted serenity," this season now became busier for the slaughterer, became busier and bloodier in preparation for the holiday season. He could no longer sleep, for even if he dozed off, he was beset by nightmares:

Cows assumed human shape, with beards and sidelocks, and skullcaps over their horns. Yoineh Meir would be slaughtering a calf, but it would turn into a girl. Her neck throbbed, and she pleaded to be saved. She ran to the study house and splattered the courtyard with her blood... In one of his nightmares, he heard a human voice come from a slaughtered goat. (212)
- 16 Ultimately, he stops asking questions; rather he testifies against God, for he does indeed consider himself more compassionate than the Holy One:

Something within him wept and mocked. "Well, and what if the rabbi said so?... And even if God almighty commanded it, what of that? I'll do without rewards in the world to come! I want no paradise... I'll have none of your favors, God! I am no longer afraid of your Judgment! I am a betrayer of Israel, a willful transgressor!... I have more compassion than God Almighty - more, more!... It is an abandoned world!... Father in Heaven, Thou art a slaughterer!... The whole world is a slaughterhouse!"... He had opened a door to his brain, and madness flowed in, flooding everything. (214-15)
- 17 Yoineh Meir no longer asks, but the reader is left to keep asking those ultimate, profound questions.
- 18 Had it not been for a political strategy, Yoineh Meir would have been the rabbi of that Hasidic court; he was only made the slaughterer to give him a living, considering that his piety and his knowledge qualified him for the job. Once his role has been decreed, however, he does not dare to go against it; once the new Rabbi explains the rationale

for slaughtering, Yoineh Meir ceases to question him. Nor does he question God. It is only when his role becomes unbearable that he protests, and then his despair takes the form first of madness, and then of outright rebellion. Abraham, son of Moses Maimonides wrote: "Know that it is your duty to understand that whoever propounds a certain theory or idea and expects that theory or idea to be accepted merely out of respect for the author without proving its truth and reasonableness pursues a wrong method prohibited by both the Torah and human intelligence" (vii). Of course we must assume that he refers to the learned, the pious, those whom questioning would not be likely to lead away from the path of Torah. Yoineh Meir would have qualified, even if Singer would not. And we note that it is the theories of men that the wise must interrogate. Bloom writes: "Interpretation, Midrash, is seeking for the Torah, but more in the mode of making the Torah larger than in opening it to the bitterness of experience" (Finkelstein 45, quoting *Map*, 42). But Singer, in his secular "Midrash," does open it out to the bitterness of experience. And he certainly seems to be unwilling to "accept" the unacceptable simply out of respect even for God. Clearly he tells a story meant to challenge.

- 19 To my mind "The Slaughterer" is unmistakably a holocaust story, in which Singer, like Job, like Yoineh Meir, never denies God, but clearly calls Him to judgment, calls God to a *Din Torah* - a judgment according to Torah. The "text" he interrogates is the bitter one of history, as well as all those helpless texts that attempt to interpret it⁸. And he does so with a(nother) story. We are left with that story to read and to interpret - to interpret interpretation, to ask questions about a story that is itself a bitter question. Our deepest questions are met with more questions, with a story that raises more questions than it answers, and which invites our questions, and our stories - stories by means of which we complain, or ask, or remember and bear witness.

- 20 According to Eli Weisel, God created man because He loves stories - a conclusion Weisel reaches based on the Chasidic tale of the Baal Shem Tov:

When the great Rabbi Israel Bal Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer, and the miracle would be accomplished and the misfortune averted. Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Mezritch, had occasion for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say: "'Master of the Universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer.'" And again the miracle would be accomplished. Still later, Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say: "I do not know how to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, but I know the place and this must be sufficient." It was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished. Then it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: "I am unable to light the fire and I do not know the prayer; I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is to tell the story, and this must be sufficient." And it was sufficient.

- 21 Only the last, Rabbi Israel, is said to speak to God. Only he has the privilege, it might seem, but in fact, he does so because he has no other means of getting God's attention. Nothing is left to him but words - his own words - and the faith that God will listen, for to speak implies a listener. And what does he tell God? Is it the story of his people's suffering, or is it the story of those others whose lives he knew, but whose rituals he did not? It is no matter. What is most important is telling the stories, listening to them, interpreting them, and passing them on in the stories we in turn tell. Perhaps, as

Weisel and the Rizhiner Rebbe imply, in asking and testifying, in remembering and being reminded - in *telling* lies our salvation.

- 22 Acknowledgment: I would like to thank my daughter, Sandra Oster Baras, for pointing me toward Midrash and Aggadah in pursuing this topic."Aggadah." Encyclopedia Judaica. Vol. 2. 16 vols. 1971.

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NOTES

1. God himself does this in His whirlwind when Job's righteousness and questions force Him down: "Did YOU create the Monster of the Deep?" etc.
2. The introduction was to the *En Jacob*, a compilation of Aggadot from the Babylonian Talmud.
3. Howard Schwartz considered Singer, along with Agnon and Peretz, one of the "allegorical writers," who "saw themselves as being directly in the aggadic tradition. Drawing on the various categories of sacred literature, ...[they] sought their models from the past. Of course they were also familiar with various 20th century literatures and drew on these sources as well. This conjunction of the ancient and modern proved a fertile meeting ground..." (176).
4. See also Hartman and Budick's *Midrash and Literature*, especially the Introduction, and the articles by Heinemann, Goldin, and Jabes. See also Chapters One and Two of Schwartz's *Reimagining the Bible*.
5. More recently, Philip Roth's story, "The Conversion of the Jews," dramatizes failure to appreciate questions. Ozzie, American suburban kid that he is, fits right into the tradition, asking difficult questions that constantly get him into trouble with Rabbi Binder, his Hebrew school teacher, who sees Ozzie, not as a questing Rabbinical sage, but as a kid with a lot of chutzpah. Of course it's brazen to swear at a teacher, but what provokes Ozzie's rage is the Rabbi's unwillingness to take his questions seriously. This last: "If God can do anything couldn't he have made Mary pregnant?" is a wonderful question. And a perfectly good Jewish answer would have been: Sure He could have, but He didn't! Ozzie's revenge - threatening to jump off the roof (in a hilarious parody of Christ's temptation in the wilderness) unless mother, Rabbi, everybody bow down and recite their belief in Jesus Christ - does not end with a triumphant Ozzie on high above the bowing Jews. Rather he is left sobbing: "Don't ever, ever again hit anyone for asking questions."
6. I refer to Ozick's essay "Literature as Idol: Harold Bloom," in which she writes: "What Bloom means by 'revisionism' is a breaking off with the precursor; a violation of what has been transmitted; a deliberate offense against the given, against the hallowed... the usurpation of an inheritance by the inheritor himself; displacement. Above all, the theft of power" (185). She goes on to point out that in normative Judaism "undoing the precursor's strength" has no validity... Torah includes the meanings of tradition and transmission together... Transmittal signifies carrying over of the original strength... and that is what is meant by the midrash that declares, "All Jewish generations stood together at Sinai" (194). Her notion of violation is part of her own conflicted grappling with the notion of artist as maker of idols, of competing, (as creator of texts to be revered, interpreted) with the Creator. We might ask: is Singer "normative"? Does that matter - to him, to us? Is he "idol-maker" or idol breaker, and then we must ask: which idols does he attack? Does he "violate" or carry forward the tradition he learned from Aggadah?
7. Along with Biblical exegesis, legends, thoughts and anecdotes of the sages, Aggadah also included such topics as magic, angelology, demonology, folk medicine, amulets and charms (Stern xvii).
8. In analyzing Bialik's motives for undertaking the Herculean labor of gathering and systematizing the Aggadot, Stern posits that Bialik may have felt a deep parallel between the predicament of his age and that of the Rabbis, who had to create a Judaism that would survive the Roman destruction of the Temple which destroyed at the same time the centrality of observance in Jerusalem, in other words, a Judaism that could be carried with the Jews into exile. "Both Aggadah, and its parent, Rabbinic Judaism, were born out of a complex of historical factors that include some of the most productive and most catastrophic moments in all of Jewish history" (xix). Certainly, this can be said of our time as well, and we might go on to find the further parallel between Bialik and Singer.

RÉSUMÉS

Depuis la Bible et jusqu'à l'époque moderne, la littérature des Juifs s'est souvent tournée vers Dieu pour lui demander des explications. Aussi, ce langage qu'on pourrait qualifier de « translogique » dérive-t-il de la tradition dialectique du Talmud et du midrash et est un élément typique de l'esprit Yiddish.

C'est le conte en tant que question ou en tant que véhicule d'une question chez I.B.Singer en particulier qui constitue le sujet de cet article. Les deux nouvelles « Une couronne de plumes » et « Le massacre » posent la question de la justice, du bien et du mal, de la nature de la vérité et du lieu où celle-ci peut être trouvée. Elles seront examinées dans la perspective d'analyser leur processus de questionnement.

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